Military Children and Youth Symposium

Peterson Air Force Base, Colorado
April 15, 2011

21FSS PETERSON AFB FORCE SUPPORT SQUADRON

ISFAC
Inter-Service Family Assistance Committee

OPERATION: MILITARY KIDS
MILITARY FAMILIES IN OUR OWN BACKYARD.

FORT CARSON THE MOUNTAIN POST

SCHRIEVER AIR FORCE BASE FORCE SUPPORT SQUADRON

Exceptional Family Member Program (EFMP)

Susan Moyer
EFMP Manager, Fort Carson

Exceptional Families Exceptional Service

What is the EFMP?

- Big Picture - Assignment Coordination
- Program Exists for All Military Services
- Mandatory Enrollment
- Keep Family Together When Possible
- Soldier Focus on Mission

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What is an EFM?

- Soldier's Family Member (Spouse, Child)
- Regardless of Age
- Physical, Developmental, Intellectual, Mental Health, Educational
- Follow-up Care
- Bottom Line: Diagnosis - Enroll

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Important to Note . . .

- Assignment Focus – Service Provider, NOT Diagnosis
- Needs of Individual EFM
- “Compassionate Reassignment Installation”
- Educational Needs – Overseas Only
- 1 in 7 Soldiers Has an EFM
- Over 4000 EFMs at Fort Carson

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Local EFMP Office: What Do We Do?

- Link with Resources: Early Intervention, Support Groups, Community/State Agencies, Laws, Disability Specific Organizations, Publications, etc.
- Systems Navigation: Medical, Early Intervention, Schools, Social Security/Medicaid Waiver, etc.
- Respite Care (Waitlist)
- Advocacy: Assignment, Housing, Medical, School

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Local EFMP Office: What Don't We Do?

- Provide Therapies
- Provide Funding (Therapies, Specialized Equipment, Housing Modifications, etc.)
- Provide Service Animals
- Provide Emergency Child Care
- Provide Authorizations for Medical Care

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School Advocacy

- Focus on Communication and Collaboration
- No Iron Fist; Not Mediation Bound
- Understanding of Rights and Responsibilities: Both School AND Parental
- READ the IEP
- Write Questions; Write Answers
- Keep Journal/Records
- If It's Not Written Down, It Was Never Said

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School Advocacy – Susan's Tips

- IEP Meetings are Intimidating
- Understand Military Culture Regarding Authority
- Limit/Eradicate Use of Acronyms
- Ask/Confirm Understanding; Don't Assume
- Discuss Options – 504 Plan?

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School Advocacy – Susan's Tips (con't)

- Provide Draft Copy of IEP
- Follow-up With Parent – Questions/Concerns?
- Relocating Families: Write Brief Synopsis of Child's Progress/Cover Letter – Think About When YOU Try to Interpret Another State's IEP

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Resources

- Peak Parent Center (www.peakparent.org)
- Specialized Training of Military Parents (STOMP) (www.stompproject.org)
- National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities (NICHCY) (www.nichcy.org)
- Military HomeFront (www.militaryhomefront.dod.mil)
- Wrightslaw (www.wrightslaw.com)
- Military Child Education Coalition (MCEC) (www.militarychild.org)
- Colorado Department of Education (CDE) (www.cde.state.co.us)
- Military OneSource (www.militaryonesource.com)

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THE STRENGTH OF OUR FUTURE

Kate Hatten, Program Manager
PPACG Military Impact Planning

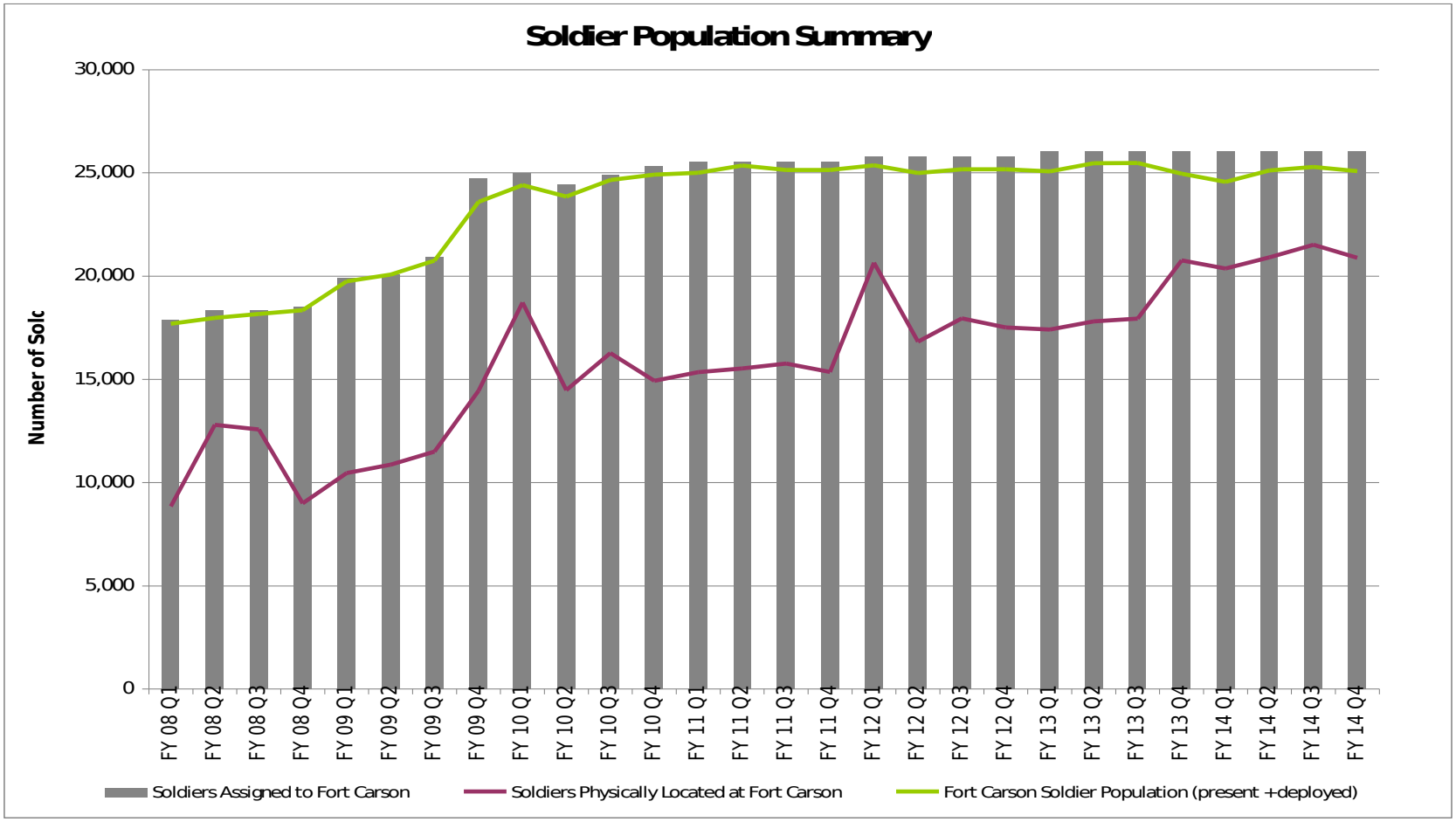
Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments
Communities Working Together

Phase III Data Gathering/Information Sharing

- **Ongoing Soldier and family population projections to assist planners and providers, including:**
  - **Effects of deployments on housing industry (which affect Soldier/family location)**
  - **Effects of growth and deployments on other services, including:**
    - **Schools and early care and education**
    - **Workforce**
    - **Behavioral health and social**

ort Carson Demographic Model

dier Forecasts

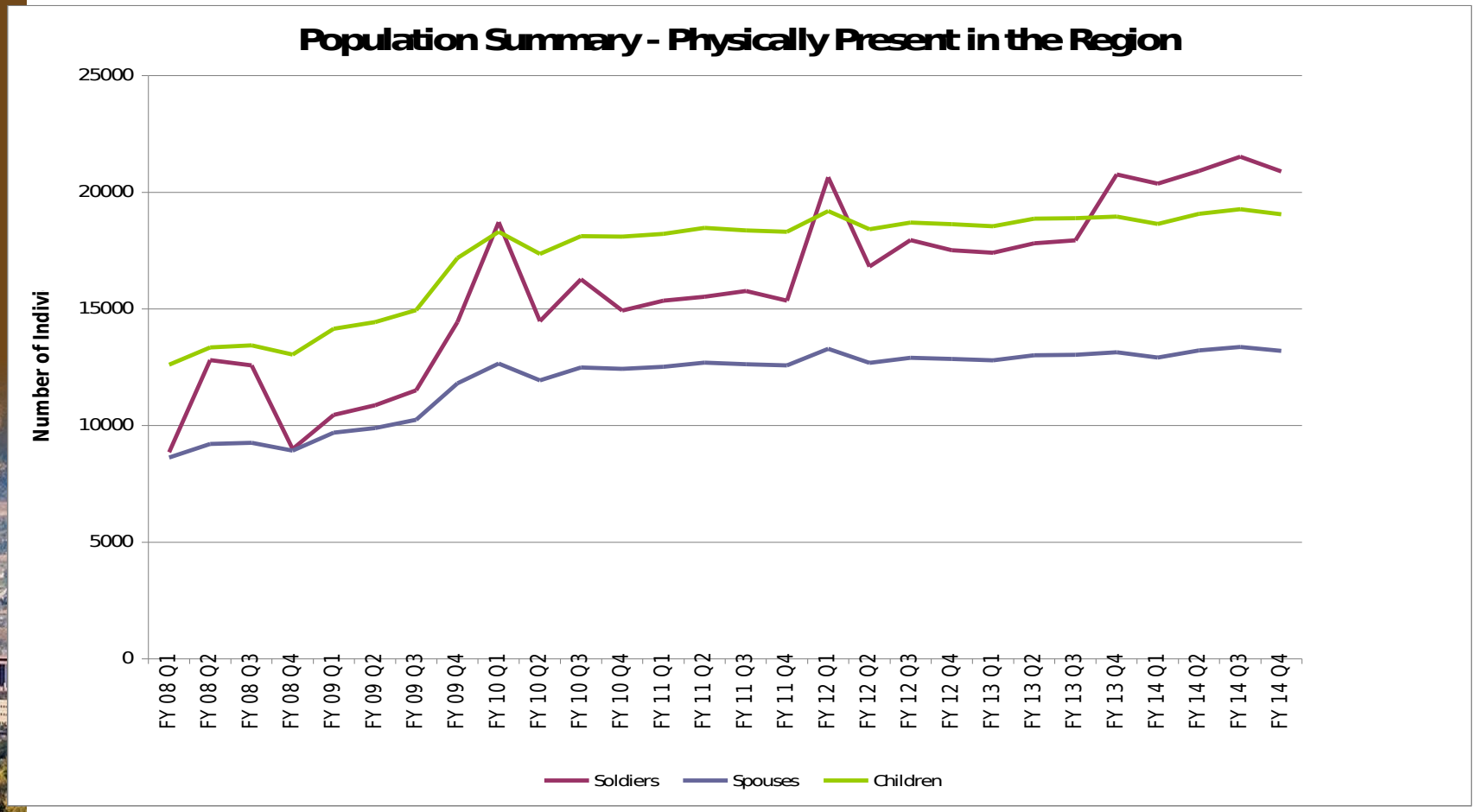


Source: BBC Research & Consulting

Note: deployment cycles are subject to change; Soldier projections are based on PPACG and BBC Research & Consulting data analysis; recently-announced CAB not included in these figures.

ort Carson Demographic Model

pulation Summary: Physically Present



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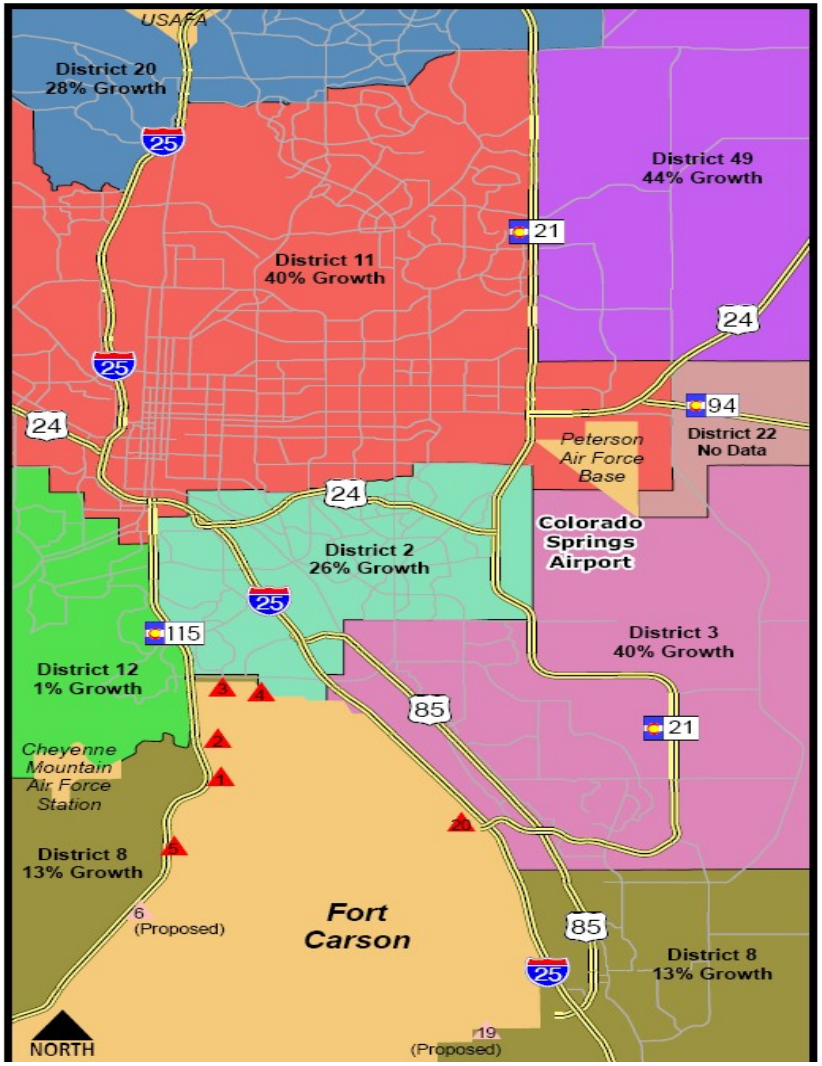
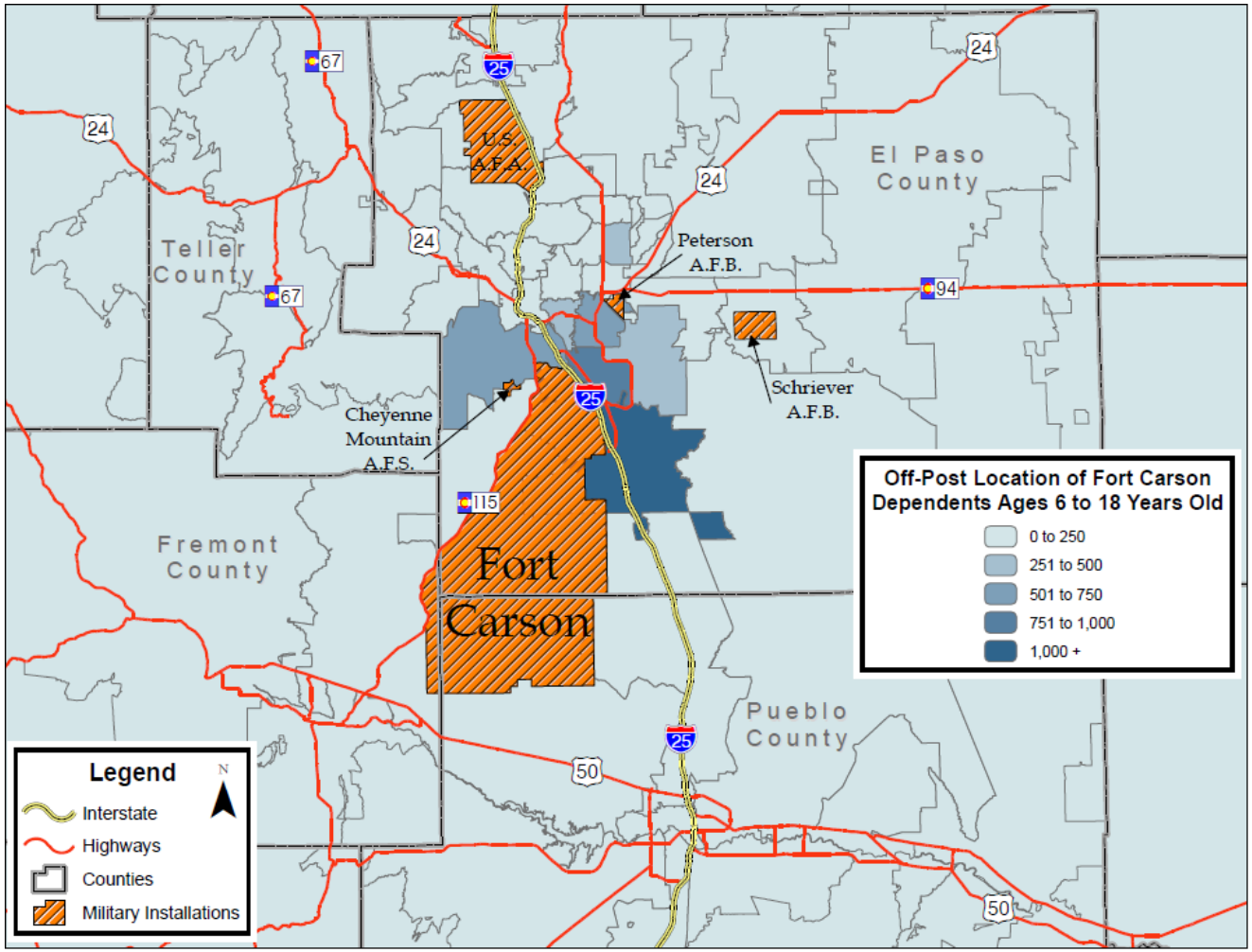
Key Recommendations (K-12 Education)

- **Track school enrollments**
- **Assist districts in meeting capacity and operational needs**
  - **Second count day funding?**
  - **Requirements for serving children with special needs**



Increase in number of Fort Carson students between 2008-2009 and 2009-2010 school years.

2011 Location of Fort Carson School-Age Children



Special Needs Incidence-Fort Carson Children 2009-2010 School Year

	Army Children			Overall District Enrollment		
	Special Education	*Total Army Children*	*Percent in Special Education*	*Special Education*	*Total Enrollment*	*Percent in Special Education*
2009-2010 School Year						
Academy D-20	56	775	7.2%	1,702	22,620	7.5%
Cheyenne Mountain D-12	24	362	6.7%	246	4,578	5.4%
Colorado Springs D-11	76	999	7.6%	2,408	29,673	8.1%
Falcon D-49	73	785	9.3%	1,386	14,398	9.6%
Fountain-Fort Carson D-8	579	4,263	13.6%	955	7,365	13.0%
Harrison D-2	100	1,157	8.6%	1,108	11,309	9.8%
Widefield D-3	268	1,662	16.1%	1,202	8,851	13.6%
Total	1,176	10,519	11.2%	9,007	98,794	9.1%

Source: BBC Research & Consulting, 2010 based on district Federal Impact Aid data and Colorado Department of Education data.

Special Needs Incidence-Military Children 2010-2011 School Year

	2010 - 2011							
	Military Students			All Students			Military SPED students as percentage of all SPED	Military Students as percentage of total enrollment
	Military SPED students	Total military students	Percent Military students in SPED	Total SPED students	Total Enrollment	Overall percent in SPED		
District								
Academy D-20	224	3,072	7.3%	1,810	23,119	7.8%	12.4%	13.3%
Cheyenne Mountain D-1	43	482	8.9%	296	4,561	6.5%	14.5%	10.6%
Colorado Springs D-11	180	1,825	9.9%	2,584	28,464	9.1%	7.0%	6.4%
Falcon D-49	188	2,244	8.4%	1,511	14,708	10.3%	12.4%	15.3%
Fountain-Fort Carson D-	610	4,428	13.8%	1,004	7,536	13.3%	60.8%	58.8%
Harrison D-2	125	1,338	9.3%	964	11,147	8.6%	13.0%	12.0%
Widefield D-3	303	2,052	14.8%	1,218	8,985	13.6%	24.9%	22.8%
Total	1,673	15,441	10.8%	9,387	98,520	9.5%	17.8%	15.7%

Source: Fountain-Fort Carson School District 8 and school districts based on Federal Impact Aid data and Colorado Department of Education data.

Questions and How to Participate

Contact PPACG

Military Impact Planning Program

- **Phone: 719-471-7080**
- **Website: http://www.ppacg.org**

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Montina Romero, Ph.D.
Fountain-Ft. Carson School District
Director of Exceptional Student Services

Fountain-Ft. Carson School District

Current Student Demographics:

Total Students:

Percentage of Military Connected Students:
68%

Percentage of Students in Special Education:
14%

Growth from 2006 – 2011:

Enrollment	23%
Students in Special Education	48%
Students with Autism	270%

State Laws & District Guidelines

- **Exceptional Children's Education Act (ECEA)**
- **Locally Controlled State**
  - Preschool services
  - Individualized Education Program (IEP) Development
  - District Programs
  - Transfer IEPs
- **Point of Contact**
  - District Special Education Director
  - Special Education Coordinator
- **Out of Zone/District Guidelines**
  - Colorado School Law 2010 – Article 36
  - October 1

Partnering with Families

"…No matter how skilled professionals are, nor how loving families are, each cannot achieve alone, what the parties, working hand-in-hand, can accomplish together."

(Adapted from Peterson and Cooper as cited by the Futures in School Psychology Task Force on Family-School Partnerships, 2007)

Parent Communication

- Be positive early – the first seven seconds of a meeting can dictate a positive or negative outcome
- Listen carefully – not just for words, but for feelings
- Put yourself in the parent’s situation
- Encourage the parents to talk
- Be patient
- Eliminate misunderstandings by summarizing what the parent says
- Be specific as to what you will do to remedy the concern/problem

"With frequent interactions among schools, families, and communities, more students are more likely to receive common messages from various people about the importance of school, working hard, thinking creatively, helping one another and staying in school…the more school and home are perceived to be similar, the more students achieve."

Epstein, J.L., Sanders, M.V., Simon, B.S., Salinas, K.C., Jansorn, N.R., & Van Voorhis, F.L. (2002*) School, family and community partnerships: Your handbook for action.*

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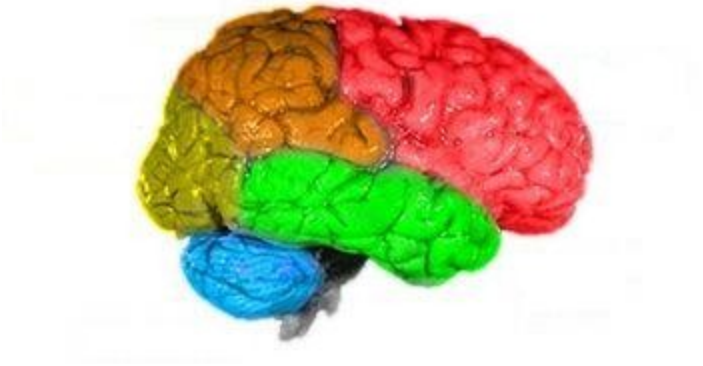
THE LEARNING SOLUTION

AVOIDANCE BEHAVIOR IS A SYMPTOM OF A PROCESSING ISSUE



Eliminating specific learning difficulties such as ADD/ADHD, Dyslexia

And alleviating negative emotional memory

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THE LEARNING SOLUTION

THE HUMAN BRAIN & EMOTIONS

- Humans are ***adaptable***….we want to succeed, but that doesn't mean we aren't ***effected*** by the process. It takes more energy to compensate and can wear on an individual's self-esteem.
- Stress blockages typically develop, based on ***the individual's perception*** of reality, between birth and 5 years old, unless there is chronic stress, they can develop later in life.
- **LIMBIC SYSTEM – BRAIN'S EMOTIONAL FILTER**

  - Amygdala – our emotional filter; where we hold all negative memories ie. subconscious programs

  - Hippocampus – short-term memory/transfer to long term and where we build associations, ie. Learning and punishment

  - Para-hippocampus – response center ie. emotional, visceral, etc

How Do Stress Blockages Effect Learning?

Without organic brain damage involved, LEARNING DIFFICULTIES are nothing more than NOT being able to access the certain part of your brain that does the processing for that specific task AND/OR not having the synchronicity between brain function.

Symptoms of Unsynchronized Brain Function

- Tired of arguing about homework?
- Frustrated with report cards?
- Does your child exhibit avoidance behaviors or mood swings?
- Does your child have difficulty focusing, poor follow-through or get overwhelmed with assignments?
- Reading or comprehension issues
- Spelling or memorization difficulties
- Difficulty with Math or organizational issues
- Test Anxiety

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BRAIN HEMISPHERES & LEARNING

- GESTALT – creative, intuitive, symbol decoding, impulsivity
- **ADD-ADHD** GESTALT DOMINANT
  - Lack of focus - Short attention span
  - Emotionally immature - Mood swings
  - Easily frustrated - No sense of time
  - Difficulty with spelling - Basic math
  - Directions - Reading comprehension
  - ❖ *Often times we hear, "I hate……", "I can't……" because it feels as if their hands are tied behind their backs even though they KNOW the information.*
- **Visual Recall – MEMORY of visual info is high; spelling; multiplication**
  - will need Auditory input if low; compensation

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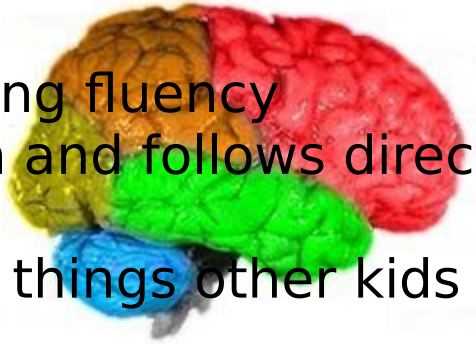
THE LEARNING SOLUTION

BRAIN HEMISPHERES & LEARNING

- LOGIC – linear, sequential, time-oriented
- **DYSLEXIA** LOGIC DOMINANT
  - good at basic math (until Algebra – symbols),
  - can't spell
  - difficulty with reading fluency
  - good concentration and follows directions well
  - clumsy
  - needs to be taught things other kids 'just get' because of lack of intuition (Gestalt function)



Visual Construction – seeing from the Mind's Eye; spelling/ multiplication tables

- if low, will need auditory instruction; compensation

- Sees the individual parts to things but has difficulty seeing the big picture.

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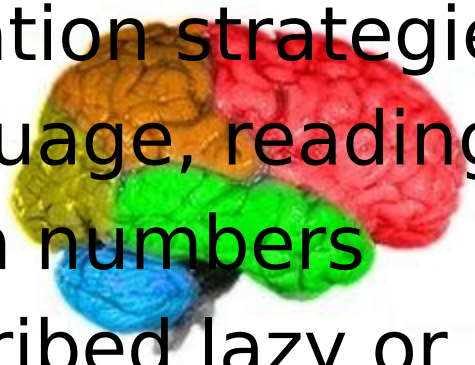
THE LEARNING SOLUTION

- SERIOUS LEARNING PROBLEMS – limited access to both hemispheres
  - no compensation strategies
  - delayed language, reading, spelling
  - difficulty with numbers
  - may be described lazy or slow



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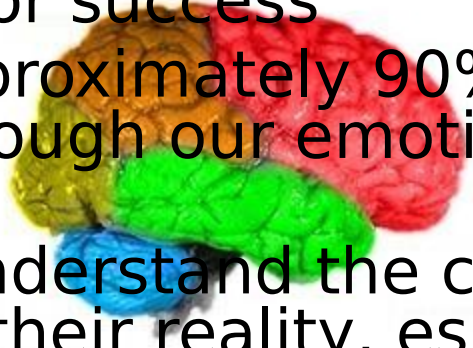
THE LEARNING SOLUTION

- Summary
  - Emotions are typically a big underlying issue to learning difficulties and MUST be taken into consideration for success
  - We process approximately 90% of all information through our emotional filter; the Limbic System
  - Important to understand the child's perspective of their reality, especially in Special Education
  - Avoidance behavior is a symptom of a processing issue
  - Having access to the part of the brain that is blocked resolves the learning issue; the human brain is 'designed' for easy learning



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